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# Annual Report of Director of Traffic

District of Columbia :: 1929

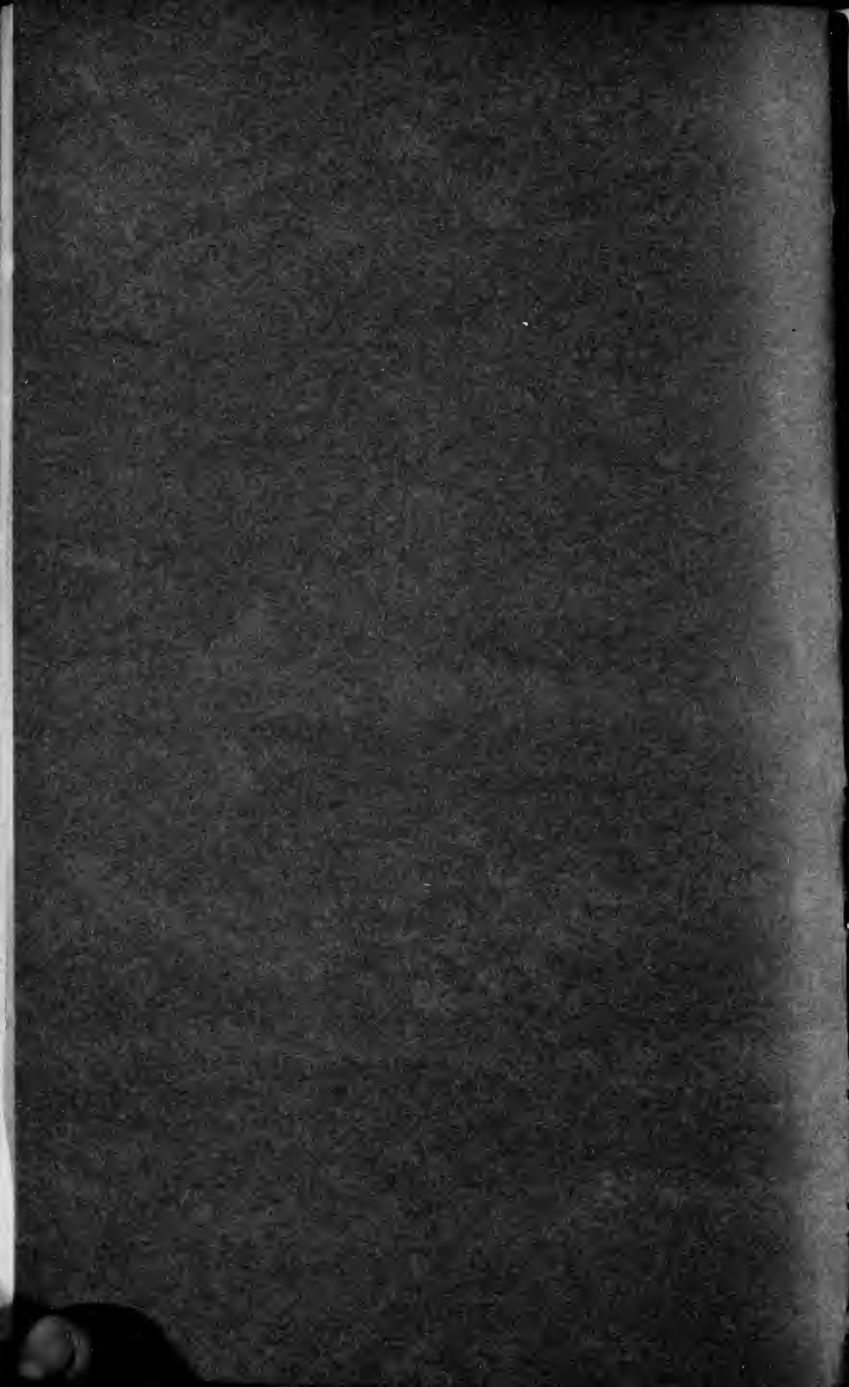
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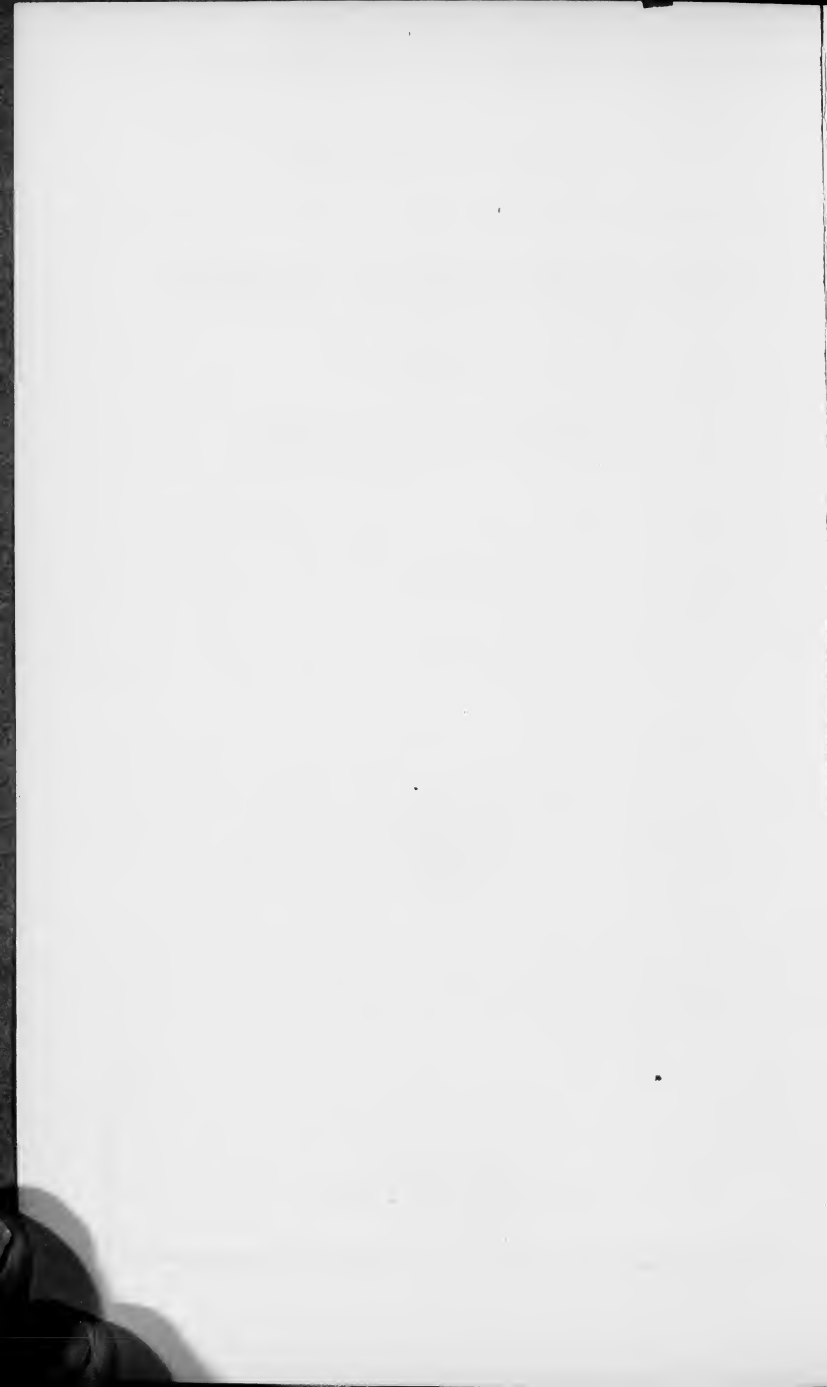


**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**OF**  
**THE DIRECTOR OF TRAFFIC**  
**OF THE**  
**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**1929**



**UNITED STATES**  
**GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE**  
**WASHINGTON : 1929**



## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TRAFFIC OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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*To the Commissioners of the District of Columbia:*

During the fiscal year ending June 30, 1929, automobile registrations increased 23,519, or 17 per cent, over the previous year. Out-of-town cars also increased proportionately. There were 6,684 accidents reported during the year, as compared with 4,138 during 1928, 5,911 during 1927, 8,049 during 1926, 9,378 during 1925, 9,131 during 1924, and 8,491 during 1923. Of the total number of accidents during the past year, 3,243 resulted in personal injuries as compared with 2,386 during the previous year.

The principal causes of traffic accidents where the motorists were presumably at fault were as follows (the list is arranged in order of frequency):

1. Reckless driving.
2. Failure to give right of way.
3. Turning in the street.
4. Careless driving.
5. Skidding.
6. Driving under the influence of liquor.
7. Lost control.
8. Backing.
9. Failing to give signal.
10. Defective equipment.
11. Speed.

Among the chief causes of accidents where pedestrians were presumably at fault the following are listed in the order of frequency:

1. Crossing not at a crosswalk (jaywalking).
2. Playing in street (children).
3. Walking in street.
4. Stepping from behind parked cars.
5. Inattention.
6. Crossing at crosswalk against signal.
7. Stepping from behind passing car.

From the above it will be seen that traffic accidents could be greatly reduced if drivers, as well as pedestrians, would exercise greater caution, care, and consideration for the rights of others when they are in the streets.

The attention of parents is directed to the fact that 23 children under 14 years of age were killed in traffic during the fiscal year. Nine of this number were less than 5 years of age. Children should be instructed not to play in the streets under any circumstances and cross a street only at a crosswalk.

### TRAFFIC FATALITIES

A total of 88 persons were killed in traffic accidents during the fiscal year, as compared with 89 during the previous year. Of this number, 67 were pedestrians, and 21 were killed in collisions. Of

the total fatalities, 83 are classed as motor-vehicle fatalities, 4 as street-car fatalities, and 1 person was killed by falling from a bicycle. A further classification of the traffic fatalities for the year just closed as compared with the same figures for the previous year is as follows:

	1928-29	1927-28		1928-29	1927-28
Automobile—pedestrian.....	54	40	Automobile—taxicab.....	1	0
Street car—pedestrian.....	4	8	Automobile—child's wagon.....	0	1
Truck—pedestrian.....	6	7	Automobile—street car.....	0	1
Taxicab—pedestrian.....	1	6	Automobile—fixed objects.....	3	5
Motor cycle—pedestrian.....	1	0	Motor vehicle—noncollision.....	19	3
Bus—pedestrian.....	1	1	Taxicab—street car.....	0	1
Bicycle—pedestrian.....	0	2	Truck—child on skates.....	1	0
Total.....	67	64	Truck—police on motor cycle.....	1	1
Automobile—automobile.....	1	7	Truck—police on bicycle.....	1	0
Automobile—truck.....	2	4	Total.....	21	25
Automobile—motor cycle.....	2	0	Grand total.....	88	89
Automobile—bicycle.....	0	2			

<sup>1</sup> Of this number 4 were drowned and 2 fell from vehicles.

White drivers were responsible for 57 traffic fatalities and colored drivers for 26. Male drivers were responsible for 79 automobile fatalities and female drivers for 4. In this connection it is interesting to note that only 14 per cent of the drivers in Washington are colored and only 16 per cent of all drivers are females, thus indicating that females are the safest drivers and that colored persons are responsible for more fatalities than white persons in proportion to their number.

The verdicts of the coroner's juries regarding traffic fatalities during the past two years are as follows:

	1928-29	1927-28		1928-29	1927-28
Accidental.....	71	63	No inquest (driver killed).....	1	1
Held for grand jury.....	13	15	Unavoidable.....	1	0
Carelessness of deceased.....	1	5	Total.....	88	89
Killed by unknown driver.....	1	5			

Of the total number of cases held for the grand jury, three have been indicted. Five were held for trial by the grand jury, and five cases have been ignored.

The permits of 19 of the drivers involved in traffic fatalities were revoked, suspended, or blacklisted, depending upon the degree of negligence or recklessness on the part of the driver.

#### TRAFFIC FATALITIES IN WASHINGTON VERSUS OTHER CITIES

Washington still continues to occupy a favorable position in this matter when compared with other cities throughout the United States. For several years the United States Census Bureau has collected figures on this subject, showing the number of persons killed by automobiles in various cities, based on population. These figures are published every 4 weeks for the 52-week period, and for several years Washington has occupied a place at or near the top of this list. The table following covers the monthly reports from January to July, 1929:

*Automobile fatalities for cities having over 350,000 population for 52 weeks ended as indicated below*

[United States census figures. Rate per 100,000]

	Jan. 26	Feb. 23	Mar. 23	Apr. 20	May 18	June 15	July 13
Washington.....	14.0	14.0	14.4	14.2	14.2	14.6	15.1
Baltimore.....	15.4	15.5	16.6	16.1	15.9	15.9	16.1
Boston.....	14.8	13.8	13.7	13.1	13.8	13.7	14.4
Philadelphia.....	16.6	17.2	17.4	17.5	18.1	18.8	18.8
Minneapolis.....	17.2	17.0	17.0	17.6	18.3	19.0	19.8
New York.....	17.9	17.8	18.2	18.0	18.1	18.5	18.8
Kansas City.....	18.0	17.7	17.5	17.5	18.0	17.2	17.7
Pittsburgh.....	19.0	18.7	19.3	19.03	19.4	19.0	18.5
Indianapolis.....	19.7	19.5	17.1	18.8	17.4	16.6	15.5
San Francisco.....	17.9	16.5	17.0	17.2	17.2	17.7	16.6
St. Louis.....	20.5	21.1	21.0	21.7	22.1	21.5	21.4
Detroit.....	22.7	21.7	22.6	23.0	23.6	22.2	22.5
New Orleans.....	22.2	22.5	23.7	23.2	22.7	23.2	22.4
Buffalo.....	21.7	21.9	23.2	24.4	24.2	23.0	23.6
Milwaukee.....	20.5	20.3	19.6	18.8	18.0	20.3	19.5
Newark, N. J.....	23.1	22.9	22.5	20.8	19.1	18.3	19.1
Cleveland.....	23.5	22.6	23.1	23.8	19.1	18.3	19.1
Chicago.....	26.8	26.0	25.9	25.3	24.8	25.7	24.7

Figures for Los Angeles and Cincinnati not available.

By a study of this table it will be seen that Boston is the only city having a population of over 350,000 which has a lower and better traffic-fatality record than Washington.

#### OPERATORS' PERMITS

A total of 50,326 examinations of drivers were held during the year. Of this number 36,137 passed and 14,189 were disapproved. Most of these qualified later.

The total number of permits issued and the amounts received from that source for the year were as follows:

	Issued	Amount collected
New permits.....	22,972	\$68,916
Duplicates.....	5,884	2,942
Replacements.....	4,427	-----
Diplomatic.....	70	-----
Learner's permits.....	7,833	-----
Total.....	41,186	71,858

A total of 1,093 motor-vehicle operators' permits were revoked or suspended during the year, as compared with 959 during the previous year, and 629 were restored, as compared with 482 restorations during 1928. Of the number of permits revoked or suspended during the year the action on 112 cases occurred as a result of offenses committed by District of Columbia drivers outside of the District. It will be noted in the table below that the privilege of 34 nonresidents to operate in the District was suspended during the year. The reasons for the revocations and suspensions are indicated in the following table:

	1928-29	1927-28		1928-29	1927-28
Driving under the influence of liquor.....	369	411	Obtaining permit by fraud.....	11	11
Leaving after colliding.....	169	166	Mentally or physically unfit.....	13	1
Reckless driving.....	94	97	Privilege of nonresidents suspended.....	34	58
Speeding.....	153	95	Miscellaneous offenses.....	59	50
Involved in traffic deaths.....	19	26			
Bad record.....	172	44	Total.....	1,093	959

## RENEWAL OF PERMITS

Plans were completed during the year just closed for the renewal of 90,802 permits which were renewed during the fiscal year 1926-27, and 17,669 permits which were issued during that year. The work of renewing these permits is now well in hand, although the work is not moving as rapidly as it should due to insufficient clerical help.

The fiscal year 1929-30 marks the beginning of the renewal of all permits on the 3-year basis, and funds will have to be provided annually to care for the renewal program.

## ARRESTS FOR TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

Complete cooperation has been received during the year from the police department in regard to traffic-law enforcement. There has been a steady drive to enforce all traffic regulations. This is attested by the fact that there were 58,894 arrests for traffic violations during 1929, as compared with 42,631 during the year 1928. A comparative list of arrests for the two years is as follows:

*Comparative list of arrests for last two fiscal years*

	1928	1929		1928	1929
Colliding.....	36	16	Parking abreast.....	2,844	2,766
Colliding and failing to stop.....	353	363	Parking overtime.....	5,497	9,359
Dazzling lights.....	84	177	Passing signals.....	1,211	2,687
Dead tags.....	374	506	Passing street cars.....	300	226
Driving on wrong side of street.....	255	263	Reckless driving.....	2,397	2,176
Driving while intoxicated.....	430	354	Violating light regulations.....	5,995	9,755
Failing to show permit.....	932	1,150	Violating speed regulations.....	158	342
Loitering (public vehicles).....	75	50	Violating 1-way street regulations.....	7,126	7,547
No District of Columbia tags.....	77	169	Violating other regulations.....	11,742	19,351
No District of Columbia permit.....	2,109	1,495			
Obstructing crosswalks.....	418	417	Total.....	42,631	58,894
Obstructing fire hydrants.....	215	225			

It will be noticed from this table that there has been an increase in arrests for dazzling lights, dead tags, failure to show permit, no District tags, parking overtime, passing signals, violation of light signals, violation of 1-way street regulations, violation of speed regulations, and for miscellaneous offenses. There has been a decrease of arrests for driving while intoxicated, no District permit, and reckless driving.

## TRAFFIC SIGNAL LIGHTS

During the fiscal year just closed considerable progress has been made in the installation of traffic signal lights at various intersections throughout the city for which contracts had been previously let. During the past year lights were installed at 131 intersections, including Dupont Circle. The number of police relieved for other duty as a result of installations during the past year was as follows:

16 full-time railway police.

11 full-time Metropolitan police.

Other officers, 163.5 hours, or approximately 20 full-time officers.

There is attached hereto, as a matter of official record, a table showing the dates on which all traffic lights were turned on, beginning with November 26, 1925, and ending May 16, 1929. This table also shows the number of police relieved for other duty as a result of the entire installation to date.



*Traffic signal lights*

## OLD TYPE

[Approximate number of intersections, 41]

Date in service	Location	Number of single-face type of signals	Police relieved for other duty—		
			Special railway, full time, 8 hours	Metropolitan	
				Full time	Part time
			Number	Number	Hours
Nov. 26, 1925	Eighteenth Street and New Hampshire Avenue.....	(1)	-----	2	-----
Dec. 18, 1925	Fifteenth and H Streets, NE.....	(2)	-----	0	-----
Dec. 23, 1925	North Capitol Street and Florida Avenue.....	(2)	-----	-----	3
Jan. 5, 1926	Sixteenth and I Streets.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Sixteenth and K Streets.....	4	-----	2	-----
Do.....	Sixteenth and L Streets.....	4	-----	-----	-----
Do.....	Sixteenth and M Streets.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Sixteenth Street and Scott Circle.....	10	-----	-----	6
Do.....	Sixteenth and P Streets.....	4	-----	-----	-----
Do.....	Sixteenth and Q Streets.....	4	-----	-----	-----
Do.....	Sixteenth and R Streets.....	4	-----	-----	-----
Do.....	Sixteenth and S Streets.....	4	-----	-----	-----
Do.....	Sixteenth and T Streets.....	4	-----	-----	-----
Do.....	Sixteenth and U Streets.....	4	-----	2	-----
Do.....	Sixteenth and V Streets.....	4	-----	-----	-----
Do.....	Sixteenth Street and Florida Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Twelfth Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Thirteenth Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Fifteenth Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	-----
Do.....	Seventeenth Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Eighteenth Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Nov. 5, 1926	Sixteenth and Euclid Streets.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Sixteenth and Irving Streets.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Sixteenth and Lamont Streets.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Sixteenth Street and Park Road.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Sixteenth and Monroe Streets.....	4	-----	-----	-----
Do.....	Sixteenth and Newton Streets.....	4	-----	-----	3
Nov. 8, 1926	Sixteenth Street and Columbia Road.....	15	-----	2	-----
Nov. 20, 1926	Fifteenth Street and New York Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	-----
Dec. 22, 1926	Seventh and K Streets.....	1	-----	-----	-----
Do.....	Seventh Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4	-----	1	-----
Do.....	Seventh Street and New York Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Ninth and K Streets.....	1	-----	2	-----
Do.....	Ninth Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Ninth Street and New York Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	-----
Do.....	Tenth Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Eleventh Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Jan. 29, 1927	Fourteenth Street and Rhode Island Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Fifteenth Street and Rhode Island Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Seventeenth Street and Rhode Island Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Jan. 21, 1928	Twelfth and L Streets.....	1	-----	-----	3
Total.....	-----	161	3	8	69

## NEW TYPE

[Number of intersections, 131]

Sept. 20, 1928	Connecticut and Florida Avenues and S Street.....	8	-----	1	3
Sept. 20, 1928	Eighteenth Street and Columbia Road.....	4	2	-----	-----
Sept. 30, 1928	Connecticut Avenue and Kalorama Road.....	4	-----	-----	3
Oct. 1, 1928	North Capitol and H Streets.....	4	2	-----	-----
Do.....	North Capitol Street and Rhode Island Avenue.....	4	-----	-----	3
Oct. 11, 1928	Connecticut Avenue and McKinley Street.....	4	-----	-----	-----
Oct. 11, 1929	Connecticut Avenue and Morrison Street.....	4	-----	-----	3
Oct. 16, 1928	Thirteenth Street and Park Road.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Thirteenth and Monroe Streets.....	4	-----	-----	3
Nov. 2, 1928	Rhode Island Avenue and Fourth Street NE.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Fourteenth Street at drive south of B street NW.....	4	-----	-----	1½
Nov. 12, 1928	Fourteenth and B Streets SW.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Fourteenth and Water Streets.....	4	-----	-----	3
Nov. 13, 1928	First Street and Rhode Island Avenue.....	8	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Second Street and Rhode Island Avenue NW.....	4	-----	-----	3
Do.....	Third Street and Rhode Island Avenue NW.....	4	-----	-----	3

<sup>1</sup> Isolated; replaced with bracket type.<sup>2</sup> Isolated.

## Traffic signal lights—Continued

## NEW TYPE—Continued

Date in service	Location	Number of single-face type of signals	Police relieved for other duty—		
			Special railway, full time, 8 hours	Metropolitan	
				Full time	Part time
Nov. 13, 1928	Florida and Rhode Island Avenues NW	4			3
Do	New Jersey and Rhode Island Avenues	4			3
Do	Fifth Street and Rhode Island Avenue	4			3
Do	Sixth Street and Rhode Island Avenue	4			3
Do	Sixth and R Streets	4			
Do	R Street and Rhode Island Avenue	4			3
Do	Seventh Street and Rhode Island Avenue	4			3
Do	Eighth Street and Rhode Island Avenue	4			3
Do	Ninth Street and Rhode Island Avenue	4			3
Do	Q Street and Rhode Island Avenue	4			3
Do	Tenth Street and Rhode Island Avenue	4			3
Do	Eleventh Street and Rhode Island Avenue	4			3
Do	Twelfth Street and Rhode Island Avenue	4			3
Nov. 14, 1928	Eighth and H Streets NE	4	2		
Do	Eighth and East Capitol Streets	4			
Do	Eleventh Street and Pennsylvania Avenue SE	4			3
Do	Good Hope Road and Nicholas Avenue SE	4		2	
Nov. 15, 1928	New York and New Jersey Avenues NW	4			3
Do	New Jersey Avenue and H Street	4			
Nov. 19, 1928	Connecticut Avenue and Calvert Street	4			
Do	Connecticut Avenue and Woolley Lane	4		1	
Do	Connecticut and Cathedral Avenues	4			
Do	Vermont Avenue and U Street	4			
Nov. 20, 1928	Wisconsin Avenue and Miscomb Street	4			3
Nov. 22, 1928	Rhode Island and South Dakota Avenues	4			
Dec. 10, 1928	Wisconsin Avenue and M Street	4	2		
Dec. 25, 1928	Thirteenth and F Streets	4			
Do	do	4		2	
Do	Thirteenth and G Streets	4			3
Do	Thirteenth and H Streets	4			
Do	Thirteenth Street and New York Avenue	4			
Do	Thirteenth and I Streets	4			
Do	Thirteenth and K Streets	3			
Do	Twelfth and K Streets	4			
Do	Thirteenth and L Streets	4			
Jan. 1, 1929	Fourteenth and Harvard Streets	4			
Do	Fourteenth Street and Columbia Road	4			
Do	Fourteenth and Irving Streets	6			3½
Do	Fourteenth and Kenyon Streets	3			
Do	Fourteenth Street and Park Road	4		2	
Do	Fourteenth and Monroe Streets	4			
Jan. 20, 1929	North Capitol and E Streets	4			
Do	New Jersey Avenue and E Street NW	4			
Do	First and E Streets NW	4			
Do	Second and E Streets NW	4			
Do	Third and E Street NW	4			
Do	Fourth and E Streets NW	4			
Do	Fifth and E Streets NW	4			
Do	Sixth and E Streets NW	4			
Do	Eighth and E Streets NW	4			
Do	Ninth and E Streets NW	4	2		
Do	Tenth and E Streets NW	4			
Do	Eleventh and E Streets NW	4			
Do	Twelfth and E Streets NW	4			
Do	Sixth and D Streets NW	4			
Do	Sixth Street and Louisiana Avenue	4			
Jan. 24, 1929	Tenth and H Streets NW	3			
Do	Tenth and I Streets	3			
Do	Tenth Street and New York Avenue	4			
Do	Tenth and K Streets	4			
Do	Eleventh and K Streets	4			
Feb. 3, 1929	Ninth and G Streets	4			
Do	Tenth and G Streets	4			
Do	Eleventh and G Streets	4			
Do	Twelfth and G Streets	4			
Do	Fourteenth and G Streets	4			
Do	Tenth and F Streets	4		2	
Feb. 6, 1929	Seventh and D Streets	4			
Do	Seventh and E Streets	4		1	
Do	Seventh and F Streets	4	2		
Do	Seventh and G Streets	4	2		
Do	Seventh and H Streets	3			
Do	Seventh and I Streets	3			

*Traffic signal lights—Continued*

## NEW TYPE—Continued

Date in service	Location	Number of single-face type of signals	Police relieved for other duty—		
			Special railway, full time, 8 hours	Metropolitan Full time	Metropolitan Part time
Mar. 6, 1929	Twentieth Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4			
Do.....	Twenty-first Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4			
Do.....	Q Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4			
Do.....	Twenty-second Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4			
Do.....	Twenty-second and Q Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Twenty-second and P Streets.....	4			3
Mar. 7, 1929	Sixth and F Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Sixth and G Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Sixth and H Streets.....	3			
Do.....	Sixth and I Streets.....	3			
Do.....	Sixth Street and Massachusetts Avenue.....	4			3
Do.....	Sixth and K Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Sixth Street and New York Avenue.....	4			3
Do.....	Sixth and L Streets.....	3			
Do.....	Sixth and M Streets.....	3			
Do.....	Sixth and N Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Sixth and O Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Sixth and P Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Sixth and Q Streets.....	4			
Mar. 24, 1929	Dupont Circle.....	21			
Mar. 20, 1929	do.....	1			
Apr. 11, 1929	Fifteenth and I Streets.....	3			
Do.....	Fifteenth and K Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Fifteenth and L Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Fifteenth and M Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Fifteenth and P Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Fifteenth and Q Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Fifteenth and R Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Fifteenth and S Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Fifteenth and T Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Fifteenth and U Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Fifteenth and V Streets.....	4			
Do.....	Fifteenth Street and Vermont Avenue.....	4			
Jan. 1, 1929	Florida Avenue and Eckington Place.....	4			
May 1, 1929	Northeast corner Sixteenth Street and Columbia Road.....	1			
Total .....		511	16	11	94½

## RECAPITULATION

Number of inter-sections and signals		Police officers relieved for other duty		
Intersec-tions	Signals	Special railway, full time, 8 hours	Metropolitan	
			Full time	Part time
		<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Hours</i>
41	161	3	8	69.0
131	51'	16	11	94.5
172	672	19	19	163.5

From the above it will be noted that 19 railway officers, 19 Metropolitan officers, and other part-time officers for 163.5 hours, which is equal to 20 full-time officers, or a total of 58 full-time officers, have been relieved for other duty by the installation of traffic light signals.

On the basis of \$2,100 per annum for each officer the gross theoretical saving as a result of relieving these men for other duty has amounted to \$121,800. If there is deducted from this amount the annual cost

of maintaining the 672 signals, at \$20 per year each, or a total of \$13,440, there will remain a net saving of \$108,440 due to this installation. The average cost of the lights installed and in place amounted to \$260 each, or a total of \$174,720 for all lights installed up to the end of the fiscal year 1929. Thus it appears that if the cost of maintaining crossing police is compared with the cost of the lights, the lights will pay for themselves in less than two years.

A careful study of traffic conditions in Washington indicates that traffic lights have done more to bring about safe driving than any one other thing. To some extent they have slowed down traffic, but in some places they have actually speeded it up. The spot maps on file in the office clearly indicate that there has been a remarkable decrease in accidents and fatalities on all streets and at all intersections controlled by lights, and it is believed that the installation should continue until all intersections are thus controlled throughout the congested area and at all intersections throughout the city where the traffic is sufficiently heavy in both directions to justify the expense.

Additional appropriations are being asked for traffic light signals for the 1931 program as follows:

Streets	Number of signals	Present policed posts—			Police could be relieved—		
		Full time		Rush hour, Metropolitan police	Full time		Rush hour, Metropolitan police
		Metropolitan police	Traction police	Metropolitan police	Metropolitan police	Traction police	Metropolitan police
U Street and Florida Avenue, Seventeenth to Sixth Street NW	46		6			2	
F Street, Ninth to Fourteenth Streets NW	16	2	6		2	2	
Eleventh Street, F to I Streets NW	10						
Ninth Street, F Street to New York Avenue NW	10						
Pennsylvania Avenue, Sixth to Fourteenth Streets NW	40	2	6	8	2	4	
Connecticut Avenue, Davenport to Ellicott Streets	8						
Pennsylvania Avenue, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Streets NW	8	2		2	2		2
Stanton Park	16						
ISOLATED INTERSECTIONS							
Wisconsin Avenue to Massachusetts Avenue NW	4			2			2
Connecticut Avenue and Albemarle Street	4						
M and Twenty-eighth Streets	4			2			2
Georgia and Colorado Avenues NW	6			2			2
New Jersey Avenue and G Street NW	4						
Second and Pennsylvania Avenue SE	4			2			2
Eighth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue SE	4		1			1	
Rhode Island Avenue and Twelfth Street NE	4						
North Capitol Street and New York Avenue	4		1				
Connecticut Avenue and Macomb Street	4						
Total	196	6	20	18	6	9	18

#### TRAFFIC SIGNS AND MARKERS

Efforts have been made during the year to improve traffic conditions at various places throughout the District by the use of signs, markers, etc. Fourteen flashing beacons have been placed at the approach ends of seven viaducts where they serve a useful purpose. The traffic shop during the year has made and installed 15,477 signs of various kinds. It has painted 665,900 feet of white lines for cross-

walks, 12,878 feet for pedestrians' safety zones, and 21,258 feet of center lines on curves, etc. It has installed 3,362 metal traffic markers as permanent crosswalk markers. There has been used during the year 25,255 feet of rope and 1,840 feet of steel cable for barricades in connection with street construction work, parades, etc.

### TRAFFIC SURVEY

Again I wish to renew my recommendation of last year and the year before that at least \$5,000 a year be provided for the purpose of making an annual traffic survey. The National Park and Planning Commission as well as this office and other branches of the District and Government service would benefit from such a survey if made each year and kept up to date. It is understood that the traffic departments of all cities which are handling traffic matters in a scientific manner are provided with funds with which to prepare flow maps and other traffic data which enables the authorities to determine with some degree of certainty where and when traffic changes should be made and traffic lights and other devices installed.

### CERTIFICATE OF TITLE LAW

A law providing that all automobiles be titled is again urgently recommended for the District. The draft of such a law based on the best principles previously adopted in over half the States has been prepared. It is believed that this principle should be adopted in the District at the earliest possible date in order that the District may not be used, as at present, as a dumping ground for stolen automobiles from the various cities and States, and in order that we may have a better record of cars owned by residents of the District.

### PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE TRAFFIC ACT

Amendments to the present act eliminating the compulsory jail sentence for third offense of speeding, for second offense of reckless driving, and for driving while intoxicated have been prepared with the idea that the courts be allowed greater discretionary powers in such matters. It is believed that the ends of justice would be served if heavy fines were imposed for third-offense speed, second-offense reckless driving, and first offense of driving while intoxicated and the permits canceled or suspended as now provided for by law, and that the present maximum penalties should only apply to repeaters. In administering the present feature of this act this office takes the position that to be convicted for speeding three times within a year is much more serious than to be convicted three times in three years.

### VIOLATIONS BY NONRESIDENTS

The present act gives the director of traffic and his assistant power to revoke and suspend permits and the right to operate in the District for any cause deemed sufficient. The act also extends reciprocal privileges to the residents of other States to the same extent that those States reciprocate with the District of Columbia. While the traffic act specifically provides that the right of a nonresident to operate a motor vehicle in the District may be suspended for a definite period of time and that the State from which he comes shall be notified,

there appears to be some question as to whether a resident of the District who has had his permit revoked can not establish his residence in another State and come back to the District and operate his car without having his right to drive in the District restored.

The case of Richard Roe may be cited as an example. Roe had been arrested and convicted in the District of Columbia four times in five years for driving while under the influence of liquor. His permit had been revoked and restored twice. He had also been arrested several times for speeding, reckless driving; for inadequate brakes, and various other traffic offenses. He tried to have his permit restored. This was refused on account of his bad record. He then decided to move to the State of Virginia, establish a residence, and secure his right to drive in that State. Subsequently he was arrested in the District of Columbia for reckless driving, for driving while intoxicated, and operating after revocation. He was convicted on the revocation charge and sentenced to serve a term of 30 days in jail.

This case was appealed to the court of appeals, where Roe was exonerated. The case has been appealed by the District to the supreme court, but pending this decision it is urgently recommended that section 8, paragraph C, of the traffic act be so amended as to provide that "any operator of a motor vehicle whose driver's permit has been suspended or revoked in the District of Columbia, or whose right or privilege to operate a motor vehicle in the District of Columbia has been revoked or suspended, shall not operate a motor vehicle in the said District on the permit or registration certificate of any State, Territory, or foreign country until his permit or right to operate in the District of Columbia has been restored." Unless the act is so amended or unless the District succeeds in this appeal, the present act providing for cancellation and suspension of permits in the District will become ineffective.

#### FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Suggestions have been made from time to time that all motorists should be required to establish their financial responsibility by providing themselves with public liability and property damage insurance, or indemnity bonds to pay damages for which they may be held responsible. The State of Massachusetts has enacted a law requiring all motorists to take out insurance.

From a safety standpoint the Massachusetts law has not proved entirely successful. It seems to be the opinion of all those who have studied the question from a safety point of view that it is unwise to compel motorists as a class to provide themselves with insurance or bonds on the ground that such a practice might have the effect of increasing accidents, inasmuch as it would to some extent relieve motorists of responsibility and shift the burden to the shoulders of the bondsman or the insurance companies, who would pay the bill.

A substitute plan known as the safety responsibility law has now been proposed. This proposed law provides, among other things, for the suspension of the driving rights of all persons against whom a final judgment establishing the driver's negligence has been legally rendered and who has failed to meet the judgment. The suspension is to remain in effect until the judgment has been satisfied and until

a future guaranty of financial responsibility has been established. While this provision does not absolutely guarantee the payment of the judgment, the prospect of permanent expulsion from the road is so compelling that it will inevitably tend to secure payment of such judgments in most cases.

The passage of this law would not materially change our present practice of canceling and suspending permits, but it would have a tendency to weed out all bad drivers who are financially irresponsible and to force them to meet their just obligations. This law has now been adopted, in principle, in New York, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, and it is believed that its enactment in the District of Columbia would be in the interest of public safety.

### UNIFORM LAWS AND REGULATIONS

The great majority of the District laws and regulations affecting automobile ownership and operation are in line with the standards suggested by the National Conference on Street and Highway Safety.

There are four outstanding features of the National Code which have not, as yet, been adopted in Washington, namely, a certificate of title law, a pedestrian-control regulation, a prohibition of all-night parking, and a uniform left-turn regulation.

There appears to be no opposition to a law providing that all cars be titled, and there are many good reasons why such legislation should be adopted without further delay.

Public opinion, however, is divided on the pedestrian-control regulation, on the all-night parking restriction, and upon the proposal that complete left turns shall be made on the green or "go" signal at all controlled intersections. However, due to the continuous increase in traffic it is believed that it will be necessary in the very near future to take steps toward the abolition of all-night parking in some sections of the District. This is a matter that will have to be given very careful consideration before anything is done, as there are not sufficient garages at this time to care for the number of cars parked. Careful consideration is also being given to parking conditions within the so-called congested area with a view toward prohibiting parking during the morning and evening rush periods and to the abolition of angle parking on certain streets where traffic congestion occurs. The matter of changing our present method of making left turns at controlled intersections is still under consideration. Public opinion in the District appears to indicate that no change should be made in the turn at this time. It is also felt that it would not be in the interest of safety to make a left turn on a green or "go" signal against a red or "stop" signal and against oncoming traffic. It would have the effect of slowing down and endangering through traffic and jeopardizing pedestrians who may be crossing the street on the proper signal. Further study of our local traffic condition with respect to this turn will have to be made before any recommendation can be made in this connection.

W. H. HARLAND,  
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SEPTEMBER 10, 1929.



